

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name North Liberty Park

other names/site number North Liberty Community Park

### 2. Location

street & number 309 North Jefferson Street

N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town North Liberty

N/A ☐ vicinity

state Indiana code IN county St. Joseph

code 141 zip code 46554

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination  
☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of  
Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  
☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be consider significant  
☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional  
comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- ☐ entered in the National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet

- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet

- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

- ☐ removed from the National Register.

- ☐ other, (explain:)

North Liberty Park

Name of Property

St. Joseph County, IN

County and State

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private  
☒ public-local  
☐ public-state  
☐ public-Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)  
☒ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	3	buildings
1	0	sites
3	2	structures
2	1	objects
8	6	Total

### Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

New Deal Work Relief Projects in St. Joseph County, IN

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION & CULTURE: outdoor recreation

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION & CULTURE: outdoor recreation

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE  
walls STONE: fieldstone

roof ASPHALT  
other STONE

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more sheets.)

North Liberty Park  
Name of Property

St. Joseph County, IN  
County and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significant within the past 50 years.

### Areas of significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION  
SOCIAL HISTORY  
ARCHITECTURE

### Period of Significance

1935-1955

### Significant Dates

N/A

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Works Progress Administration (WPA)

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

(Cite the books articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination if individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  
# \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record  
# \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

South Bend & St. Joseph Co Historic Preservation  
Commission

North Liberty Park  
Name of Property

St. Joseph County, IN  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 7 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	6
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5	4	5	4	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	5	9	8	5	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
Zone Easting Northing

3 

1	6
---	---

5	4	7	6	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	5	9	8	3	5	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
Zone Easting Northing

2 

1	6
---	---

5	4	7	6	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	5	9	8	5	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

4 

1	6
---	---

4	8	7	4	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	3	9	8	3	4	0
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☐ See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Glory June Greiff

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date 08-01-2005

street & number 1753 South Talbott St. telephone 317/637-6163

city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46225

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Town of North Liberty

street & number 300 South Main Street telephone 574/656-4447

city or town North Liberty state IN zip code 46554

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance to the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding the burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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LIST OF RESOURCES

Two contributing buildings: former bathhouse, bandstand

Three non-contributing buildings: an open frame picnic shelter with hipped roof and two open frame picnic shelters with gable roofs

Three contributing structures: remains of dam (with pedestrian bridge), former pool basin (including concrete check dams), fieldstone bridge abutments

One non-contributing structure: concrete bridge over former dam

Two contributing objects: fieldstone planter, fieldstone bench

One non-contributing object: stone memorial

One contributing site (the entire park), which includes the low stone wall along the bottom of the hill, two stone corner entrances, a pair of entrance posts, three sets of fieldstone steps down the hill, and a circular fieldstone ruin in the northwest corner of the park

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

North Liberty Community Park, originally called simply North Liberty Park or City Park, lies on the northwest side of the small town of North Liberty in southwestern St. Joseph County, Indiana. The park is located on Jefferson Street, north of the extension of West Market Street. The park encompasses a little under seven acres and is essentially rectangular with a trapezoidal piece missing at the southwest corner. Potato Creek runs southward through the park, and a small parcel of land west of the creek just north of the extension of Market Street is privately owned. The east edge of the park is at street level, but most of the property is downhill from there in a little valley that is the flood plain of the creek. A chainlink fence marks the boundary of the park except on the east and part of the south. West of the creek the land is all wooded. East of the creek more than half of

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the area is open land, with some wooded area at the north end. Along Jefferson Street, at Mill Street near the northeast corner of the park and at Market Street, at the southeast corner of the property, are paired fieldstone walls forming an entrance at each location. They are similar but not identical. The northern entrance (photo 1) leads into a curved stone wall forming a sort of overlook to the picnic groves below; this feature is not present at the southward entrance (photo 2). A pair of fieldstone posts lies between the two entrances described above, closer to the north entrance, but roughly at the midpoint of the eastern boundary line of the park (top of one is visible at right in photo 3). Just northwest of the entrance posts is a small stone memorial structure (see photos 3,4), affixed to which is a bronze plaque dated 1946, commemorating those who served in World War II. The structure may have been part of the original WPA work; there is an upright pipe with a faucet attached coming up through the concrete at the base. There are three sets of fieldstone steps leading down into the park. One curves down from the north end of the north entrance (photo 1); a second (photos 3,5) curves southwesterly, southwest of the pair of entrance posts, and the third set heads downhill northwest from a little distance northwest of the south entrance.

Built into the hillside just northwest of the middle set of steps is a small square building of fieldstone with stone steps on its uphill (east) side leading to its flat roof (photos 3,4,5,6). The north and south elevations each have two window openings, and there are double doors on the west, facing toward the creek. The building was a bandstand but also functioned as a storage shed for tools. A low stone wall (photos 1,6) runs along the bottom of the hill from this building to the north edge of the park.

West of the south entrance down the hill is a baseball field that does not appear to be used a great deal (partly visible in photo 1). Its south boundary runs along Market Street. The park once had five fish rearing ponds, and two were located in this general area. Leading northwest from the baseball field is a concrete bridge that will support small vehicles, probably built in the 1950s or later, placed almost over what remains of a dam constructed in the 1930s (photo 7). Much of the dam is still in place, but its iron gates are missing. Directly over the dam is a

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small concrete-and-iron pedestrian bridge, also built in the 1930s. The dam had created a pool in Potato Creek, the outline of which is marked on the west side of the creek by a low concrete wall and a fieldstone wall, part of which is terraced (photo 8). At the top of the terracing is a small fieldstone building, the former bath house, which contains restrooms (photos 8,10). The small flat-roofed rectangular building has two window openings on the west and one each on the north and south. All are bricked except the one on the south. On the east are two doors, the entrances to the restrooms. Upstream (northward) from the former dam is a footbridge. The wooden bridge itself is a more recent replacement, but the fieldstone abutments on both sides are the original, built in the 1930s. On the north side of the west abutment is a fieldstone-lined runoff drain (photo 9). Tucked in the northwest corner of the park in an unmown tangle of brambles is a fieldstone ruin, a low wall that forms about three-quarters of a circle. It is too overgrown now to identify, but it had been a fireplace oven with a circular bench.

There are three open frame picnic shelters in the park. One, with a hipped roof covered in asphalt shingles and eight upright timbers supporting it, is west of the creek, north of the bath house (photo 10). This replaced a similar but slightly larger shelter in the same location that had been built by the WPA. The other two are east of the creek near the north end of the park, downhill and northwest of the north entrance. These two are essentially identical (see photo 11), with gabled roofs and each with six huge timber uprights supporting it. These were probably constructed in the 1960s. A play area that contains a two-tiered fieldstone planter is near them (photo 11). Three small fish rearing ponds were originally located in this area, from the 1930s into the early 1960s. Not far away, a single fieldstone bench sits near the northeast corner of the park (photo 12).

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Nestled in a little valley on both sides of Potato Creek, North Liberty Community Park is a particularly attractive example of a small town park developed by the Works Progress Administration in

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the 1930s, using local labor and materials readily at hand, in this case, the ubiquitous fieldstone of northern Indiana. As described in the associated property type "New Deal work projects related to parks and recreation," North Liberty Park is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A in the areas of recreation and social history because it is associated with the New Deal's work programs and recreational development in the 1930s. It is also eligible under Criterion C because the site as a whole, and its individual resources: the bathhouse, the bandstand, the stone planter, the fieldstone walls and steps, et al., are representative of the work and style of architecture and park site development typical of the WPA in St. Joseph County. The park meets the standards of integrity as set forth in the multiple property nomination "New Deal Work Projects in St. Joseph County." The resources are representative of and associated with typical WPA workmanship, specifically, the fieldstone construction.

The land that became North Liberty Park had been part of a farm originally owned by Daniel R. McKenzie. His Italianate farmhouse still stands at the northeast edge of the park just outside the boundary. A barn once stood to the south on what is now park land. McKenzie, in partnership with Henry Bowen, ran a grist mill in the 1870s and 1880s that stood north of the house. It had closed by the turn of the century. David Hay purchased the house and farm in 1902, and it was from the Hay family that the city acquired the land for the park in about 1934.

A Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp was established south of South Bend on New Road in 1935. Set up primarily to handle public drainage projects, the company of young men at CCC Camp D-3 ("D" for "drainage") worked mostly digging ditches in the county's marshy areas and occasionally building small dams to help control flooding. Potato Creek had a long history of flooding; evidence suggests that CCC boys from Camp D-3 constructed the dam in Potato Creek that created the pool soon used for swimming.

President Roosevelt established the WPA in 1935, and Indiana was quick to get projects underway that summer, including work on the development of North Liberty's new park. A second project was undertaken in 1937 to further develop the park. WPA workers



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constructed ornamental fieldstone entrances, steps down into the park, a footbridge over the creek, a bandstand atop a sturdy fieldstone tool shed, and other fieldstone features. They outlined the swimming pool with fieldstone and built a bath house. They also built three timber picnic shelters, but all have been replaced. They created a total of five fish rearing ponds--a common feature in 1930s parks--in the southeast and northeast corners of the park.

After World War II, a small veterans memorial was created near the north entrance, but in the years following, maintenance on the park began to deteriorate. The fish rearing ponds, which had been maintained by the local Conservation Club, were drained sometime in the early 1960s, after the state government took over control of that activity in fish hatcheries. A baseball diamond occupies the place where the shallow ponds were at the south end of the park, and on the north end, the greater space allowed for more picnic tables. The original timber picnic shelters were rebuilt or replaced in the 1960s. The swimming pool, its outline still readily visible, was allowed to drain probably around this time as well. Nevertheless, even with these changes, North Liberty Park maintains a high degree of integrity with its wealth of fieldstone construction that so clearly identifies it as a project of the WPA.

North Liberty Park is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A in the areas of recreation and social history because it is associated with the New Deal's work programs and recreational development in the 1930s. It is also eligible under Criterion C because the site as a whole and its individual resources are representative of the work and style of architecture and park site development typical of the WPA in St. Joseph County.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See Bibliography, New Deal Work Project Resources in St. Joseph County Multiple Property Listing)  
Archives, Walkerton Area Historical Society.

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Interview with Alfred Heim, North Liberty native and brother of John Heim, who supervised the park work in the 1930s, and Richard Heim, one of the WPA workers who did the stone work in the park. 30 October 2005.

Karst, Frederick. *Potato Creek: From Pioneer Mill Stream to Gentle Lake*. South Bend 1980.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Starting at a point at the northwest corner of Jefferson Street and Market Street, at the corner edge of the curb, proceed 651 feet north along Jefferson Street and its northward extension; from there go due west 476.5 feet; from there due south 519.5 feet; thence east 113 feet; thence southwesterly 135 feet to a point 426 feet due west of the point of origin; thence easterly 426 feet along Market Street and its westward extension to the point of origin.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary of the historic district is the boundary of the park.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Unless otherwise noted, the following information is the same for all photographs:

1. North Liberty Park
2. St. Joseph County IN
3. Glory-June Greiff

5. Negatives on file w/Historian-at-Large, 1753 South Talbott, Indianapolis IN 46225

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Individual photos:

- 4. 8/05
- 6. looking NE up slope at north entrance
- 7. Photo 1
- 4. 8/05
- 6. looking NW at south entrance from Mill & Jefferson streets
- 7. Photo 2
- 4. 8/05
- 6. looking NE toward middle set of steps and memorial beyond
- 7. Photo 3
- 4. 8/05
- 6. looking SSW from N entrance toward playing field
- 7. Photo 4
- 4. 2/05
- 6. looking E toward pumphouse
- 7. Photo 5
- 4. 8/05
- 6. looking S toward pumphouse
- 7. Photo 6
- 4. 8/05
- 6. looking ESE at remains of dam and bridges
- 7. Photo 7
- 4. 2/05
- 6. looking WSW toward bath house across Potato Creek
- 7. Photo 8
- 4. 8/05
- 6. looking W toward detail, runoff drain and west bridge abutment
- 7. Photo 9
- 4. 8/05
- 6. looking SW toward picnic shelter and bath house beyond
- 7. Photo 10

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4. 8/05

6. looking NE at fieldstone planter

7. Photo 11

4. 2/05

6. looking N at fieldstone bench

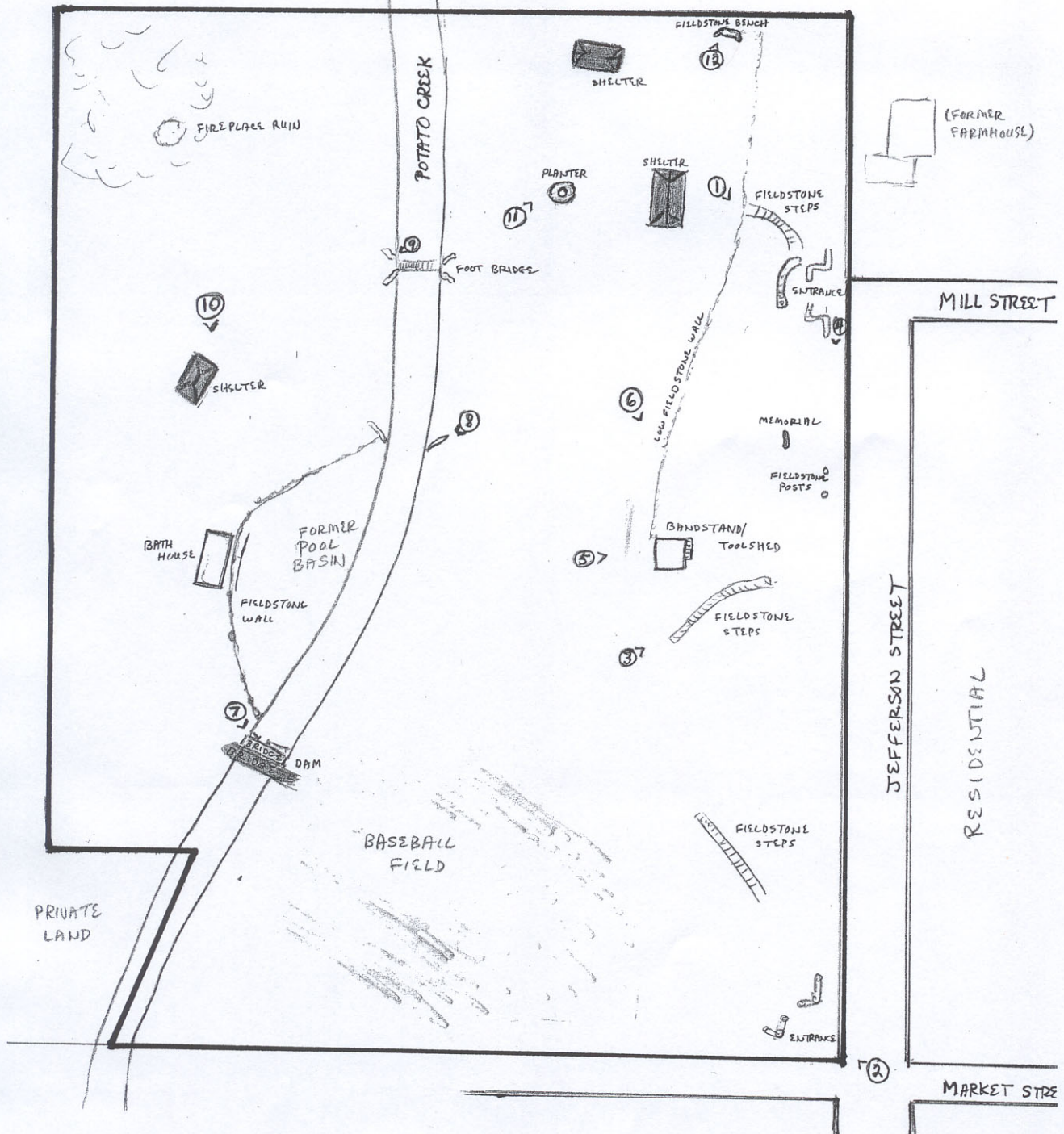
7. Photo 12

# NORTH LIBERTY PARK

— HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY  
NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES ARE SHADED.

○ INDICATES PHOTO PLACEMENT

LIGHT  
RESIDENTIAL



RESIDENTIAL



Photo 1

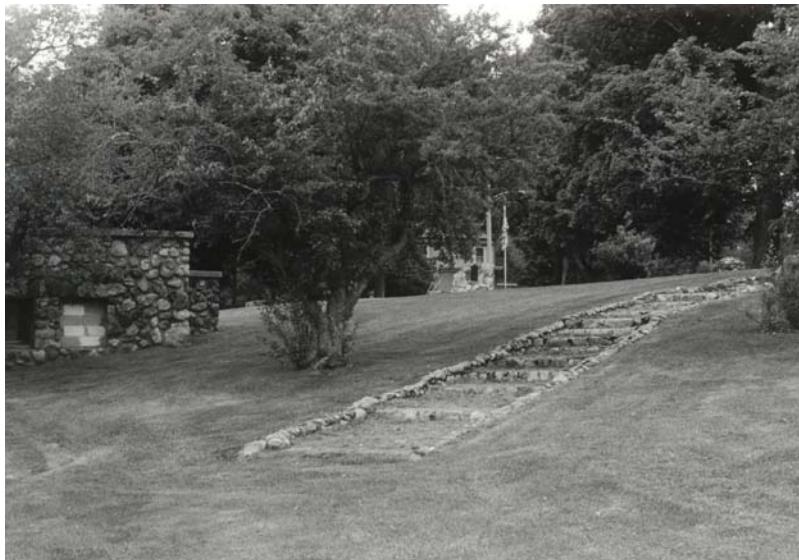


Photo 3



Photo 8





Photo 11